

be able to find the real way to freedom, a task in which we are ready to cooperate.

74

The figure and work of Agustí Calvet, "Gaziel"

Act of Homage at the A. of Journalists of Catalonia

On December 22nd 1988 was inaugurated at the headquarters of the International Press Centre of Barcelona an exhibition on the life and work of the great journalist Agustí Calvet "Gaziel", with the reason of the centenary of his birth celebrated in 1987. Before the exhibition there was an act of homage at the Association of Journalists of Catalonia for he who was director of "La Vanguardia".

The act was opened by Carles Sentís, dean of the Association, who remembered that Gaziel, in the time he was director of "La Vanguardia", transformed and converted this newspaper into one of the leader in Europe.

Joan Tapia, "La Vanguardia's" present director, remembered that, with Ramon Godó, editor at that time, Gaziel—in the years he directed the newspaper of Pelayo Street—, brought about great technical transformation, with the appearance of hollowprint pages, but that the importance of Gaziel for "La Vanguardia" was essential, also as intellectual, liberal and avant-gard orientation. Tapia went on to explain that Gaziel's preoccupation for the international world made him decisively impel this section of the paper and this is one of the fruits foreseen in "La Vanguardia" today. For Tapia Gaziel was a victim of the two bands which fought in the civil war and that, for his dialoguing and liberal nature, neither the winners nor the won were sympathetic towards him. In 1939 this attitude cost him the career as director of the daily, in the context of a Spain where political rationality had become impossible.

Josep Maria Lladó, defined by Carles Sentís as "a keen member who makes the way on foot", said that Gaziel, besides being an excellent journalist was a great writer and that, until the last moment, was true to three important realities of his life: "his land, our people and our language". Lladó said that, in many Catalan homes, the articles which habitually appeared on Fridays signed by Gaziel in "La Vanguardia", were like an profession of faith. For Lladó, Gaziel's prose was imbued with an elegant cosmopolitanism, tinged with nuances of a certain agreeable disenchantment, of paused softness, of polished literary style and a perfect vision of the present and the future.

Lladó joined "La Vanguardia" directed by Gaziel, in May 1933, coming from the newspaper "Opinió", directed by Joaquim Ventalló, and began with articles on human interest in the city, later on, to cover the section on "passages" of the Parliament of Catalonia, as also the political news of elections, becoming one of the most brilliant political journalists of the time.

Josep Maria Lladó remembered some of Gaziel's most outstanding articles, such as the one he wrote a few days before October 6th 1934, titled "The Arms of

the Generalitat" and in which he said among other things "We Catalan must rise in arms, but not arms of fire, but arms of enlightenment, by force of intelligence we shall get the better of our rivals" or the "Notes on an unforgettable night", capturing, hour by hour those dramatic events lived in Catalonia on the 5th, 6th and 7th October of 1934. In 1936 Gaziél, a liberal, democratic, Catalanist and responsible man, had to flee the country, to which he was not to return until after a long exile in Paris, since he was not well regarded by the Francist regime either, which was fully installed in Spain starting from 1939. For Lladó, in Gaziél's works there is, besides excellent literature, a permanent lesson of civilness, of love of his country and serenity in the face of everyday events.

Felipe Fernandez Armesto, born in Galicia and under the pseudonym of "Augusto Assia" was a great foreign correspondent of "La Vanguardia", a daily which he began to cooperate at the beginning of June 1929. "Augusto Assia" focused his participation on explaining what "La Vanguardia" was like at that time, with Gaziél as director and Ramon Godó as owner, consolidating the configuration of a great newspaper both from the point of view of renewal and technology, as its informative internationalisation with news coming from the "Tass", "Reuter", "Associated Press", "Stefani" or "United Press" agencies. "Assia" told a lot of anecdotes, both of journalistic life as the entrepreneurial of "La Vanguardia" and remembered all the newspaper's ups and downs during and after the Civil War. "Some papers perished in the hands of the 'reds' or of the 'nationals', with 'La Vanguardia' enraged both, and one of the feats, because it would be too much to call it a miracle, which the civil war generated in the journalistic order, is that which we could call survival of 'La Vanguardia' the twofold attack of one and the other side".

"Augusto Assia" remembered some reflections of Carlos Godó referring to "La Vanguardia" "what we owe our development is to the trust, we inspire in the people of Catalonia in general, and in particular, those of Barcelona, it is this trust we must keep if we want to continue developing".

Pasqual Maragall, mayor of Barcelona, remembered that "Gaziél, fully gripped by the civil confrontation, was at times, even characterised as a man off the rails, as a man lost for the country, the same was said of Eugeni d'Ors and Pijoan too, and it is a great mistake. In no way these fine and subtle spirits who were dismissed by our tragic history were people lost to the country, to our land and our speech, on the contrary. They are people who have brought, near or far, the best of the production of their spirit which was of enormous quality".